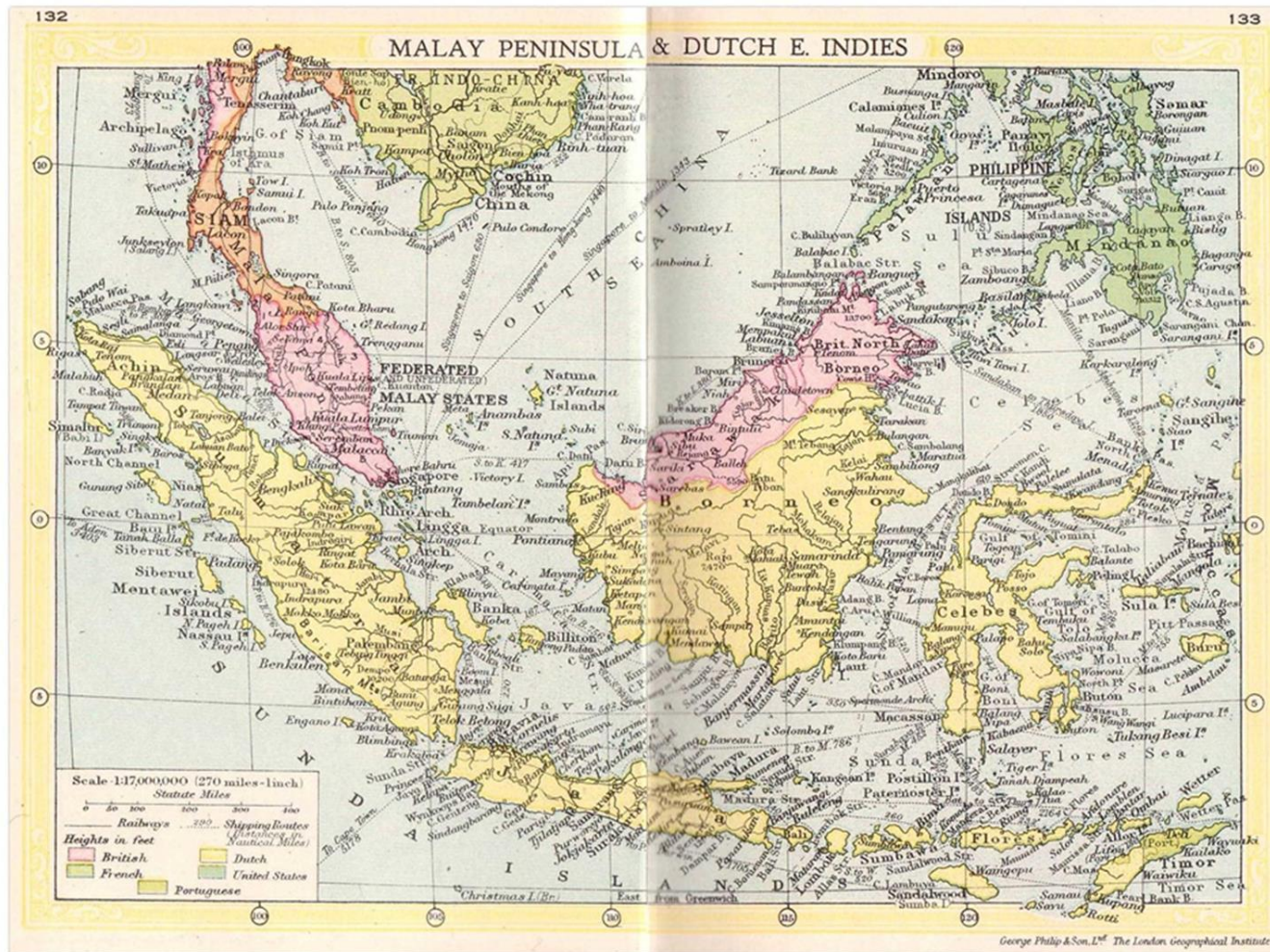
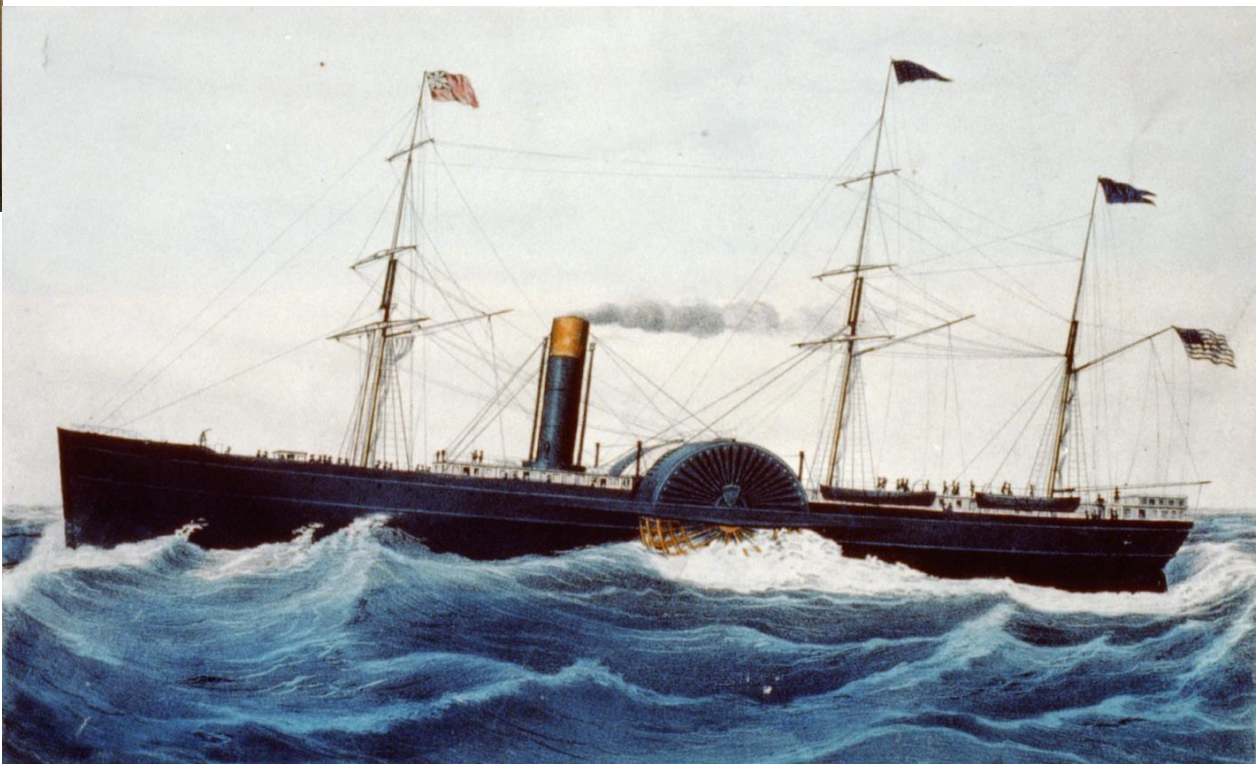


Unravelling British Borneo





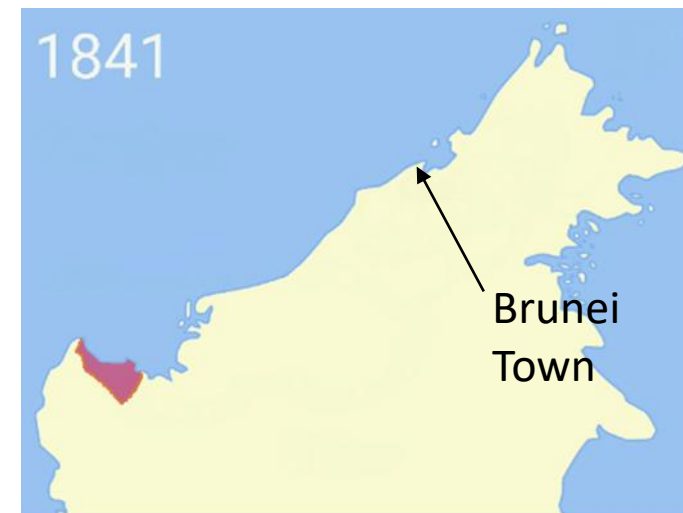
Brunei & Sarawak

In the 15th Century, Brunei sovereignty extended over the whole of Kalimantan and beyond; but successive incursions by the Spanish and Dutch, disputed successions, civil war and maladministration brought the golden age to an end. At the end of the 17th century, Brunei subsequently entered a period of decline brought on by the [Brunei civil war](#), piracy, and European colonial expansion. Later, there was a brief [war](#) with [Spain](#), in which Brunei lost [Manila](#) and evacuated their capital for a brief period until the Spanish withdrew. The empire lost much of its territory with the arrival of the [western powers](#), such as the Spanish in the [Philippines](#) and the Dutch in southern and eastern Borneo.

By 1830, Brunei had shrunk to the size of modern day Sarawak and North Borneo (less the east third), and was little more than a slave market, and its coastline the bases for piracy. A revolt arose in 1839 against the governor's taxes on earnings from an antimony working in the south of Brunei, and this continued to 1841.

James Brooke, retired injured from the East India Company, used his fortune to buy the "Royalist" which he and 16 men used to put down a revolt against the governor's taxes in the southern district (Sarawak) shown right. His reward was the governorship of the district, confirmed by the Sultan on a visit to Brunei Town.

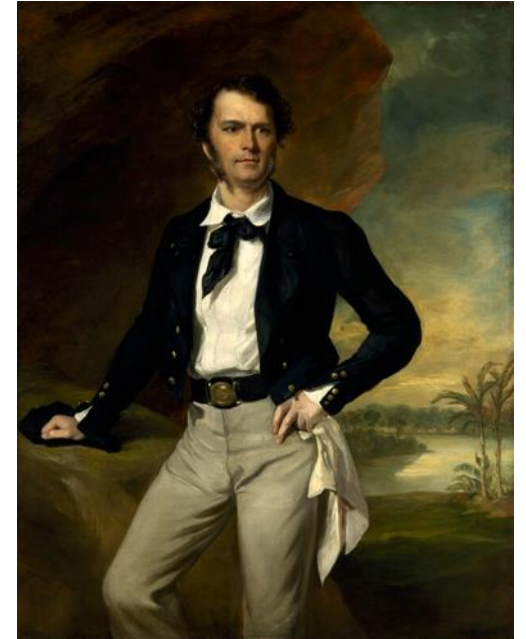
The fair administration of the Sarawak included cessation of piracy, theft and head-hunting.



Sarawak (and Labuan)

James Brooke acquired Labuan through the Treaty of Labuan (1846). This became a colony in 1848, with Brooke as Governor. However, Brooke was called to an 1854 enquiry on fatalities during a piracy action: he was cleared, but the head price for pirates was withdrawn, he was removed from governorship, and the courtesy of naval vessels to support piracy action was withdrawn.

A paternalistic ruler, his successors were bound by this approach. He encouraged scientists to visit Sarawak, and Alfred Russell Wallace and Joseph Dalton Hooker named species after him. He was also referred to in literature, for example as Conrad's model for Lucky Jim.



James Brooke



In later life he suffered from a series of strokes, and authorised his nephew Charles Brooke to manage the growing state.

Further agreed cessions of land from Brunei saw the area of enlarged Sarawak grow to a size similar to Scotland and England – further final cessions in 1890 and 1905 completed the consolidation of Sarawak.

Early Postal arrangements

From the start of the Brooke administration (1841), Sarawak had a boat service from Kuching to Singapore, timed to connect with European mails. In 1858 a postal service for the general public was in operation using Indian stamps (replaced by Straits Settlements in 1869) for postage on from Singapore. A postal contract in 1874 between Labuan and Straits Settlements set charges for Sarawak, and new stamps for 2c, 4c, 6c, 8c and 12c were issued.

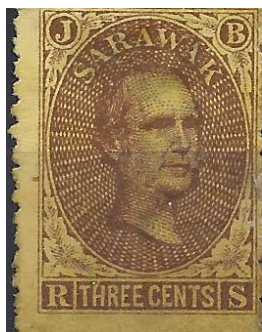
Labuan's postal services formally started from 1 August 1860 between Labuan and London via Singapore. Stamps of India and Hong Kong were stocked from 1864. Registration started at Labuan from 1864, and was compulsory for letters containing coins from 1866.

The Chartered Company of North Borneo set up a postal service and issued stamps at the start of 1883. Stamps were valid outside Borneo only if sent by direct steamer, or additional adhesives of Hong Kong, Labuan or Straits Settlements were required.

Brunei local monthly mail started in 1893 for the local mining company between Muara and Kuching. In 1895, a service was set up by John Robertson to convey post to Labuan; local stamps were valid only to Labuan, Sarawak and North Borneo.

Sarawak stamps

The first Sarawak stamp of James Brooke were produced by lithography by Maclure, Macdonald and Co, Glasgow, and issued nine months after his death in 1869. The next two litho issues were of his nephew, the new Rajah Charles Brooke.

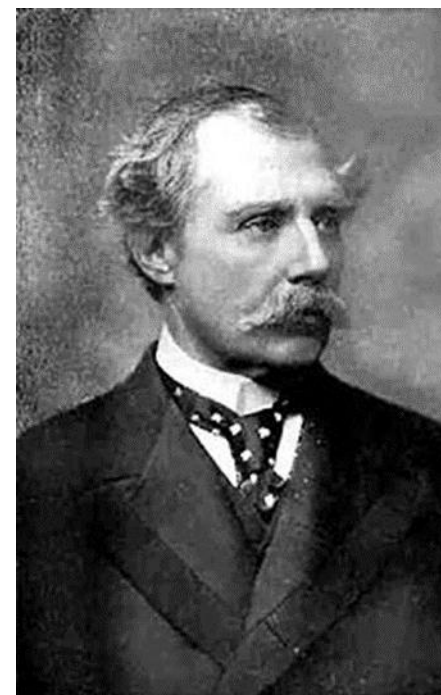


1869 – Sir James Brooke



1871

1875



Sir Charles Brooke



Postmark.
1875-1892



Sarawak

1895, Die Eng.
Wm. Ridgeway,
Recess P.B.



1899.Typo DLR.
Prepared for
use but not
issued



Sarawak

Sir Charles Vyner Brooke

1932, Recess
Waterlow



1934,
Recess BW



1945 – BMA
overprint

Labuan

Issue of Colony

1883, Recess
De La Rue



Issue of British North Borneo Company

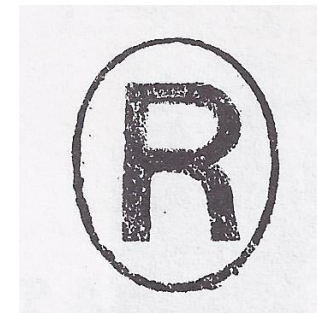
1894, Litho
De La Rue



Postcard to Singapore; 3c rate
adjusted by 1c adhesive as the
card was not in reply use



Labuan



Labuan

Labuan postal
cancellation



North Borneo cancelled-to-
order mark, used in London
for philatelic sales



1895



As for North Borneo, but overprinted "LABUAN".

Labuan

1902



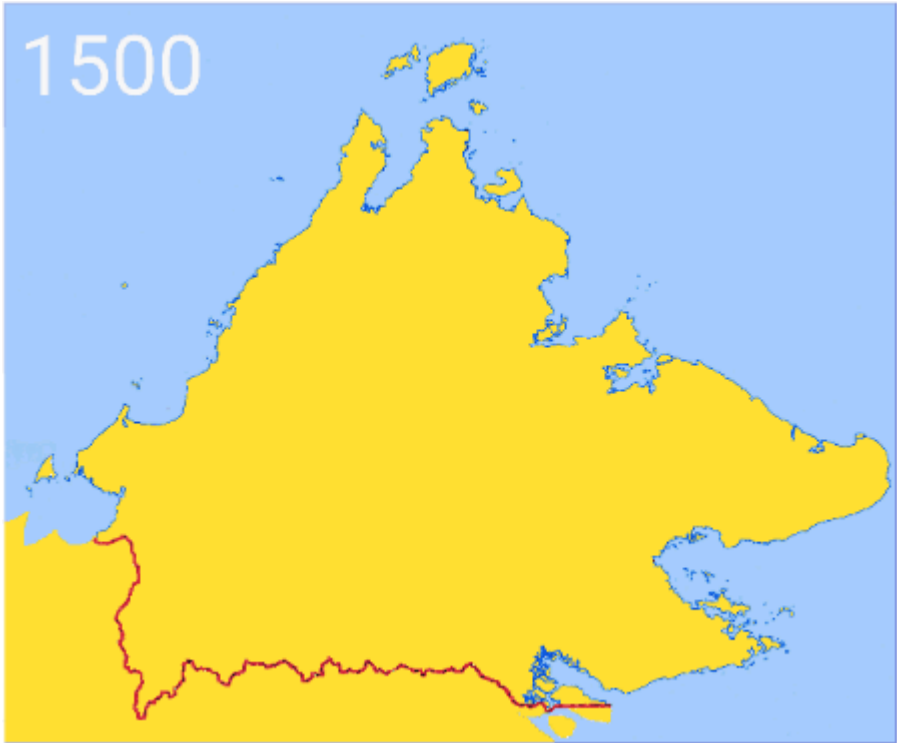
Recess Waterlow

1904 overprint 4 cents on existing stock of Labuan issue. LABUAN overprinted by Waterlow; 4 cents by Sandakan Printing Office. See heavy overprint on 5c green.



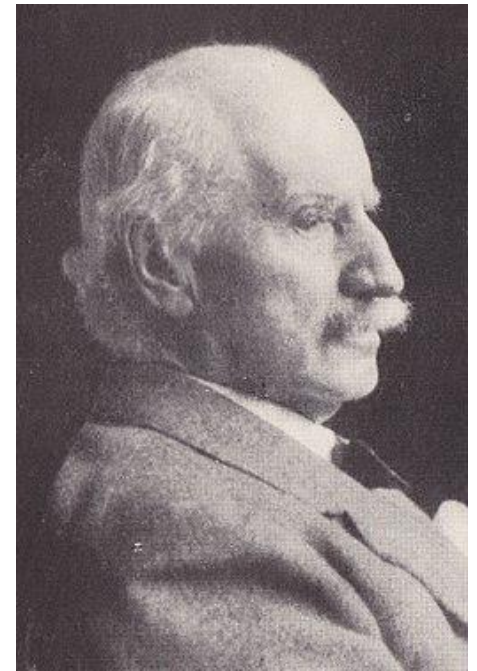
In 1906, North Borneo ceased administration of Labuan, including issuing Labuan stamps. Labuan reverted to colonial control: by Letters Patent dated 30 October 1906, Labuan was incorporated with Straits Settlements. In 1946, it became part of the colony of North Borneo.

Formation of North Borneo



In 1864 the US consul in Brunei obtained a 10 year lease of a tract of land in the west of North Borneo; the lease was transferred to 2 other Americans (Torrey & Harris) but the colony did not prosper and was abandoned in 1866. The lease was not renewed.

In 1876 the Austrian consul in Hong Kong (Baron Overbach) purchased the rights of the American Trading Company from Joseph Torrey; he then visited Brunei to obtain a 10 year lease. He acquired further large tracts of land in both eastern and western North Borneo. Failing to gain financial support in Austria and Germany, Baron Overbach involved a British businessman, Alfred Dent (below), and fully transferred his rights in 1879 before withdrawing.



In 1878, Spain obtained cession of Sulu then attempted to take control of North Borneo but was repulsed. In 1885 it renounced all claims to North Borneo.

A royal charter was granted to the British North Borneo Company in 1881. To avoid further claims from other European powers, North Borneo was made a British Protectorate in 1888.

Final boundaries of North Borneo were set in 1901.

North Borneo & British North Borneo

North Borneo stamps from 1883 to 1894 were designed by T. Macdonald and printed in lithography by Blades, East and Blades, London.

1883 – 1886
(Postage -
North Borneo)



1886 - 1888 (Postage -
British North Borneo)



1888 – 1894 Postage &
Revenue, British North
Borneo



North Borneo British Protectorate (State of North Borneo)

1894 Waterlow



1895
(surcharge by
Waterlow)



North Borneo

Overprinted BRITISH
PROTECTORATE by
Waterlow, 1901
(Protectorate status
1888)



Overprinted on surplus 1897 adhesives

Overprinted BRITISH PROTECTORATE, 1912

North Borneo

1909 Recess printed by Waterlow, London



Sumatran
Rhinoceros

Palm
Cockatoo

Rhinoceros
Hornbill



Indian Elephant

Cassowary

1888 Conference chaired by Company Director W C Cowie to discuss boundary changes with the Sultan of Sula, nominal ruler of the eastern side of North Borneo.



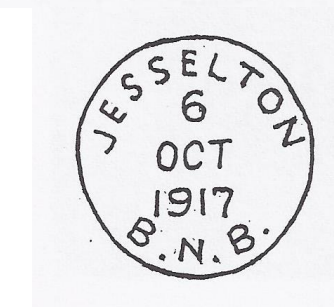
North Borneo – Red Cross Overprints 1918

August 1918



Stamps sent from London in 3 consignments, of which 2 were lost at sea. Premium of 2 cents to Red Cross Society.

October 1918



Premium of 4 cents to Red Cross Society.

Brunei

1895 – 1906 – promoted by John Robertson, Manager of Sadong Mining Company, Brooketon.



Stamps valid internally, or to Labuan or Sarawak

1906 – Labuan stamps overprinted for Brunei. Overprinted by Govt. Printer, Singapore



Brunei

1907 – Recess
printed by De La
Rue



1908

Single Plate

Double Plate

No dotted

Dotted line



Brunei

1922



Overprinted at Government Printer, Singapore

1000

Overprint varieties
in specific vertical
rows

HI

Short "I"
(all stamps
in 2nd and
8th vertical
rows)

EX

Broken "E"
(all stamps in
4th and 10th
vertical rows)

NE

Broken "N"
(all stamps in
6th and 12th
vertical rows)

Japanese Occupation

1942 – locally
handstamped
on residual
stock of
Brunei
stamps



North Borneo following Liberation



North Borneo following Liberation

1946



VICTORIA ———
17 12 1945 ———
LABUAN ———

Postmark BMA in morse code

Crown Colonies, North Borneo and Sarawak, 1947

1947
September

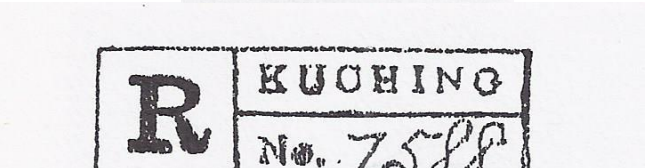


Bars obliterating
“The State of” and
“British Protectorate”

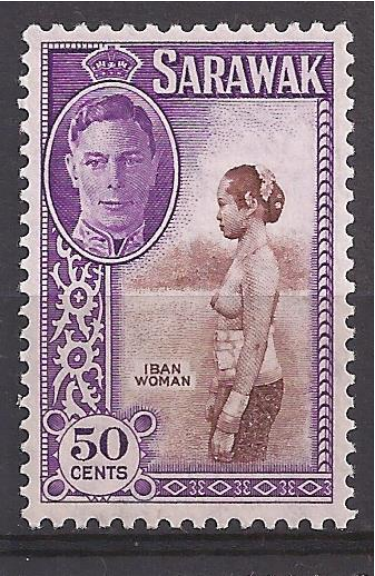


Royal Cypher for
Crown Colony

April 1947

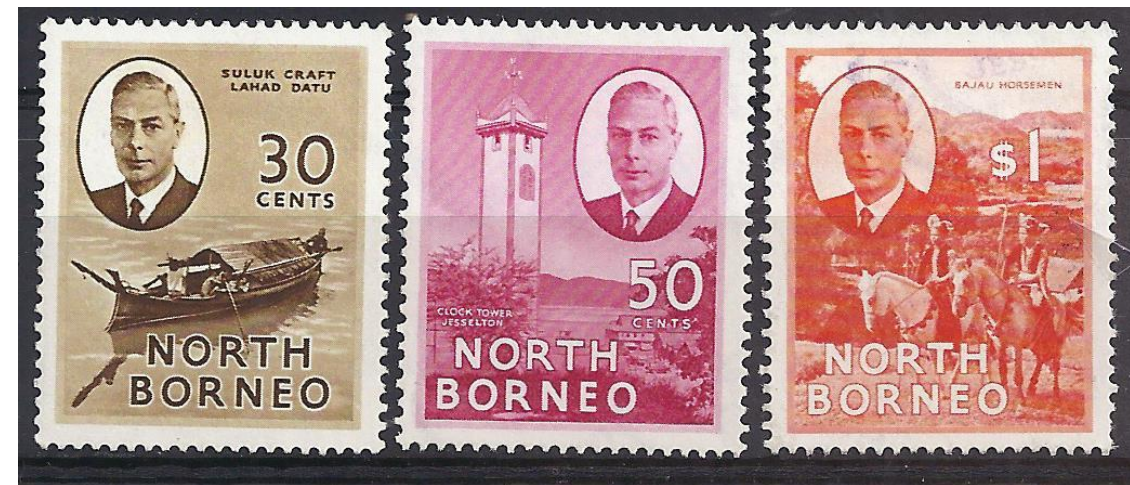


Sarawak Colony



North Borneo Colony

1950 –
Photo,
Harrison



1954 – Photo, Harrison



Same scenes for each value as
KGV set.

Change of name – North Borneo to Sabah

1961 – Recess,
Waterlow



1962, Recess,
De La Rue

Cover, Labuan to England;
violet cachet applied to all
letters in North Borneo prior
to name change



Sabah stamps

1964 –
overprinted by
De La Rue on
old stocks and
new printings



Malaysia

1965
Sabah



1986
Sabah



1988 Sarawak



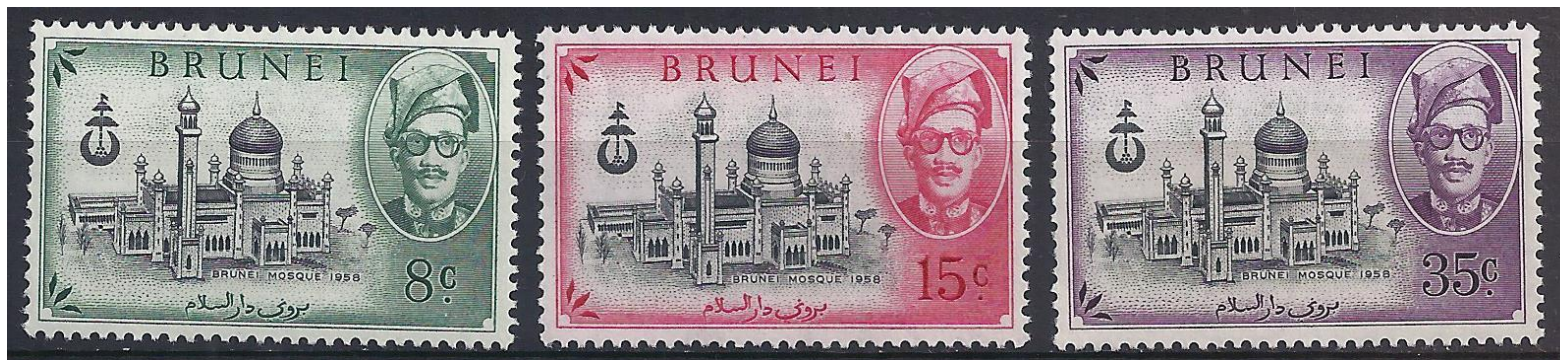
Brunei

1952 Sultan Omar
Ali Saifuddin



Same design to 1964, with
different colours,
perforations, papers and
watermarks

1956 Opening of Brunei Mosque



1963 Freedom from Hunger



Brunei

Brunei 1969,
Installation of
Pengiran
Shahbandar as
YTM

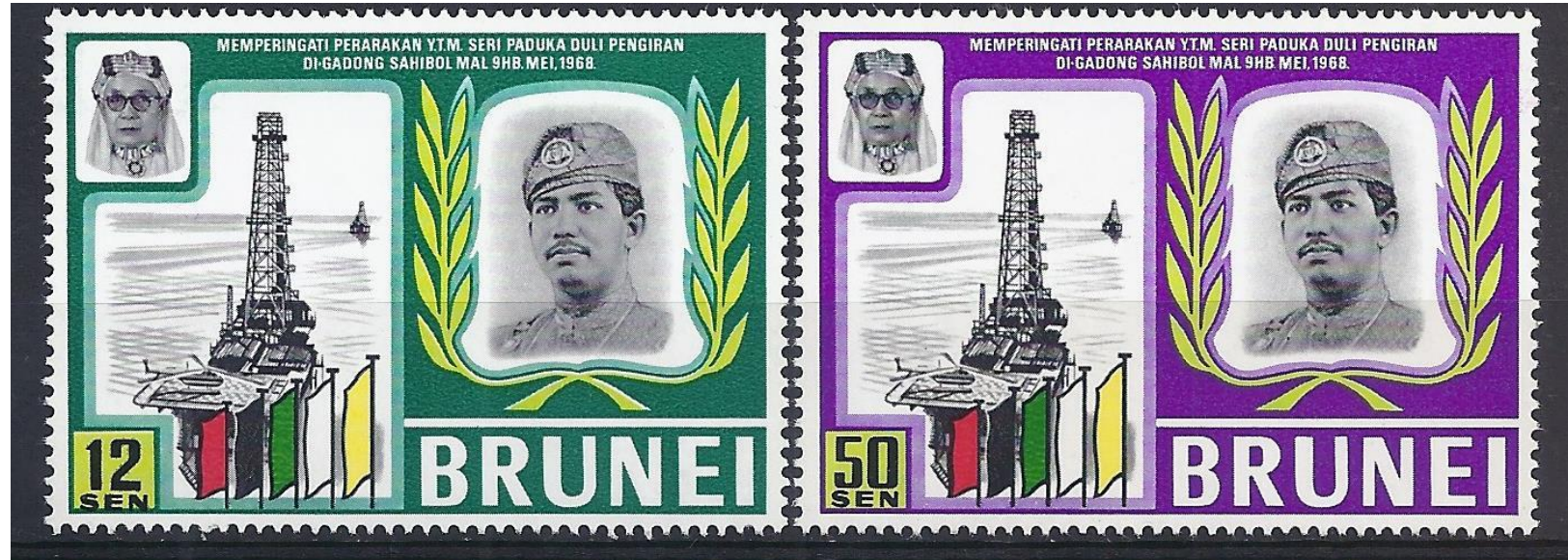


Photo
Enschedé

Brunei 1974,
Sultan Sir
Hassanal
Bolkiah
Muizzaddin
Waddaulah



Photo
Harrison;
Design Staff
Artists, Dept
Language &
Literature

Brunei Merdeka

Independence of Brunei from British Protectorate

1984 Litho
Cartor



New Supreme
Court

Omar Ali
Saifuddin Mosque

Brunei Flag and map of
South-East Asia

British content in Borneo States

